SHUNGA
JAPANESE EROTICA 1770-1900

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SHUNGA

Japanese Erotica 1770 - 1900

Warning. 18+

This catalogue contains prints depicting nudity and sexual acts. This material may not be appropriate for all viewers.

Sanders of Oxford is pleased to present a selection of *shunga* from the collection of the late British painter Peter Darach (1940-2023) who amassed over 300 prints, books, and original artworks spanning the period 1770-1900. This catalogue represents a selection of 30 highlights from Peter's collection. Sanders of Oxford has sold printed erotica for more than half a century and has been dealing in Japanese woodblock prints for over forty years, even welcoming the Crown Prince of Japan Naruhito who viewed our *Ukiyo-e* prints in the shop when he was a student at Merton College. At this time in the 1980s only male staff were allowed to open the sole solander box of erotic material to show customers and even then only in the basement (though we have it on good authority that female staff did peek at this material). By the late 1990s Sanders was selling erotica more openly on the shop floor, including the former owner Hon. Christopher Lennox-Boyd's collection of pornographic 18th century mezzotints. Sanders has had collections of *shunga* in the past but never in large numbers such as this. This collection meant a great deal to Peter and like many artists that preceded him, such as Toulouse-Lautrec, Rodin, Beardsley, Singer Sargent, and Picasso, Peter Darach looked at and collected this material for his own enjoyment as well as inspiration for his painting and drawing. We are proud to have the chance to work with this material and present it in the context of changing attitudes towards *shunga* and the body of research of the last 25 years.

These works, alongside over 70 more from the collection, are available to purchase and will be on display in the gallery from 28th February, 2025.

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SHUNGA
An Introduction

Shunga and its origins.

Shunga is the term used for the body of erotic imagery including printed images, books, and painted scrolls, produced in Japan from 1600 to 1900. The term *shunga* means "spring pictures," as spring is a Japanese euphemism for sex, and is one of several names for erotic material produced in Japan. *Shunga* is the commonly agreed term for Japanese printed and painted erotic art but the terminology has been and is still varied. The terms *Ensokuzu/onoskuzu* and *osokuzu no e* (posture or reclining pictures) had been used since ancient times to describe erotic paintings and pictures but was archaic by the Edo period. Erotic images in the Edo period were sometimes referred to as *makure-e* (pillow pictures), *warai-e* (laughing pictures), a euphemism for masturbation, and *Nishikawa-e* after the explicit work of the artist Nishikawa Sekenobu. Erotic books were known as *kôshokubon* (erotic or lascivious book), *enpon* (erotic book), *makura-bon* or *makura zhôsi* (pillow books), warai-ezoshi (laughter picture book), or *shungabon* (*shunga* book) and are now most commonly called *shunpon*.

The origin of the word *shunga* is the Japanese adaptation of the Chinese term *chunhua* (spring picture) which was in use from the early eighteenth century. The use of this term is illustrative of the heavy influence Chinese culture, style, and attitudes towards sex and erotic imagery affected the Japanese. Transmitted to Japan via medical sex manuals and painted scrolls, the Chinese tradition shaped the terminology, format, beliefs around, and naming of Japanese erotic art. This influence includes the tradition of 12 images to a scroll depicting 12 sexual acts the crown prince would perform as an expression on *yin yang* and the tendency to depict enlarged sex organs. Pictorial influences for *shunga* in Japan date back as far as the Heian period (794-1185) when there was a trend for erotic painting among court aristocracy and in temples. These images often took the form of painted erotic narrative picture scrolls.

The concept of the *Ukioy-e* as a whole presents a vision of escape but no more so than *shunga*. *Shunga* presents an invitation to pleasure through the bliss of lovemaking and though largely heteronormative, they portray the gamut of coupling, married or otherwise. *Shunga* did portray same sex couplings, typically male couplings and rarely women **(5, 16)**. Often surrounded by lavish settings, beautiful fabric, objects of pleasure, such as smoking sets, sake, kettles and teacups, lacquerware beautiful screens, and erotic books with the emphasis on mutual pleasure for all involved, including the viewer. The act of sex, and the moment of bliss, often set in everyday environments, is the focus of *shunga*.

Shunga have several common features. These include twisted figures, enlarged genitalia, an absence of nudity, the appearance of lavish surroundings and fabrics **(19)**, humour and jokes **(25)**, depicting the whole range of sexual encounters across classes and relationship styles. *Shunga* books and stories often parodied popular literature, novels, textbooks, guidebooks, and plays.

Naked figures appear in *Ukiyo-e* in bathhouse prints **(3)** but the concept of the nude as a genre in Japanese art did not appear until the introduction of Western painting styles after 1868. Naked bodies are represented in Japanese art and *shunga* but never as an end in themselves. Nudity was not problematic or inherently erotic, rather it was socially acceptable as demonstrated by Japan's long history of mixed public bathing that was part of the fabric of society until it was outlawed in 1791.

Fabric is used as a compositional element to draw the viewers' eyes to the faces and genitals of the figures. Fabric also helps the viewer identify the social rank and class of the people portrayed. It has been theorized that the elaborate patterns of the rich fabrics portrayed in *shunga* were to emphasize the luxuriousness of pleasure but also cleverly placed adverts for the latest fashions as many *ukiyo-e* printmakers worked near and with fabric designers and producers. Fabric was also a compositional element in *shunga* that helped to emphasize the main sources and indicators of pleasure – the figures faces and their genitals. The same can be said of the positions of figures bodies in *shunga*, comically likened to the forty-eight holds of sumo wrestling, they twist bodies to show the act and means of congress rather than reality. There are even jokes that couples would hurt themselves mimicking positions depicted in *shunga*.

Shunga took different formats: painted hand scrolls, painted books, printed books and albums and sets of prints which were sometimes sold in wrappers **(21, 22, 23, 24)**. As prints they are one of the genres of *Ukiyo-e*, or Floating World prints, which includes: *fukeiga* (landscape prints), *bijin-ga* (prints of beautiful women), *yakusha-e* (prints of actors), *musha-e* (prints of warriors), *sumo-e* (prints of sumo wrestlers), and *kacho-e* (prints of birds and flowers). Most of the major Ukiyo-e artists produced *shunga* material at some point during their career including Utamaro (who produced more erotic books than non-erotic books), Hokusai

(5, 6), and Hiroshige. Produced at the same time as the rise of print culture and the introduction of full colour woodblock printing, prints dramatically increased in quality and quantity. Many *shunga* prints and books were made using the most lavish and complicated printing techniques including gaufrage, metallic inks, mica, complicated printed patterns, and multicolour printing using a high number of different colours. Equally, cheaper versions of printed *shunga* were made with less complex printing and black and white only volumes making them accessible to a wide range of customers. As competition in the market increased artists sought new and different ways of enticing customers by including trick pictures with moving parts or flaps **(18)**, or more titillating content, and followed trends in popular literature and kabuki theatre.

Shunga and Japanese sexual culture.

The themes of sex and sexuality present in *shunga* have a long and established history in Japanese culture. The creation myths of Japanese islands, recorded in the 8th century, were of the sexual relations of the deities and often humorous. In the medieval period religious and superstitious depictions of sex organs were linked to the cult of roadside guardian deities. These genital shaped deities, placed on the roadside just outside villages, were thought to protect against evil spirits and disease as it was believed that procreative power prevented the ingress of evil. In the Edo period representations of the male genitalia called *Kinseijin* or *Kanamara Daimyojim*, came to be worshipped as deities who would assure success in business and sexual power. Whilst the Buddhist and Confucian doctrine adopted by the shogunate portrayed carnal desire as evil and in need of control *Shinto*, the native religion, was more open and accepting viewing sex and sexuality as an essential life force.

Shunga production flourished during the Edo period (1600-1868) and was the result of a unique set of circumstances in Japan at this time. The isolated highly regulated feudal shogunate was a status-based society controlled by the samurai in which people lived their lives under the pressure of official Confucian based morality and ethics. Contact with the outside world was restricted as visits from foreign contacts were limited and the people banned from traveling abroad. These conditions created an environment with systems of behaviour distinctly different from even its closet neighbours including a different set of behaviours, attitudes, and etiquette towards sex.

The rapid growth of urban culture in the Edo period was a major factor in the growth, development, and production of *shunga*. The samurai leader *Tokugawa Ieyasu* founded the *Tokugawa* shogunate in 1603 and built his castle at Edo as his seat. The former fishing village of Edo become the de facto capital of Japan as the centre of power while Kyoto remained the imperial capital, and Osaka, the merchant city both of which also saw rapid growth in this period radically altering Japanese society and culture. By 1635 all roughly 260 feudal lords (daimyô) were required to spend every other year at their estates in Edo with their families forbidden to leave Edo in a system called *sankin kôtai. E*ach daimyô had three houses in Edo: one for himself, one for his family, and one for his entourage including bachelor soldiers. The city became characterised by several hundred palatial homes, tens of thousands of people who needed supplies and services, of every kind, and people to fulfil those needs, this lead to the rapid expansion of Edo into one of the largest cities in the world with over one million inhabitants by 1721.

The shift from agrarian and military culture to an urban one saw the rise of the chônin (townspeople) an increasingly wealthy and literate class of townspeople made up of merchants and artisans with disposable income. Old values and modes of behaviour were upended. Money became a measure of value rather than filial piety and honour on the battlefield and fuelled a new culture of a new class. Eager to escape the confines of a strict society people sought transient pleasure in entertainment including kabuki theatre, conspicuous consumption of commodities including, prints, popular novels, sumptuous fabric, furniture, and commercial sex - all the features of the *Ukiyo* (Floating World).

The rapid growth of Edo and the large influx of soldiers meant the city was not even in male female demographics and "was for a time a city of bachelors." This attracted large numbers of sex workers. In an attempt to regulate and controlled the sex trade the shogunate government set up the Yoshiwara, the licenced sex quarter, in 1618 located on the edges of Edo. It prospered and by 1642 there were 125 bordellos, 36 houses of assignation and over 1000 sex workers. After a fire broke out in 1657, it was moved five kilometres from the city but soon flourished again as a densely populated world with its own rules. Guidebooks to the *Yoshiwara* and prints of the more famous courtesans began to be produced and were a large part *Ukiyo-e* culture and this included *shunga* illustrating scenes in the *Yoshiwara* which were influential in both promoting the Yoshiwara and setting fashion trends so much so that people male and female came to the Yoshiwara just to catch glimpses of its renowned inhabitants.

The art of the *Ukiyo-e* artists is a reflection of the new society that emerged during the Edo period. *Shunga* whilst prolific is more representative of the idea of the U*kiyo* rather than an accurate representation of Japanese attitudes and practices of sexuality. While there are many thousands of *shunga* images and books with elements that emphasise mutual pleasure for all participants, acceptance and celebration of sexual desire and fantasy, and illustrate many permutations of sexual relations including same sex ones, it would be remiss to say this is reflective of the reality of Edo practices and beliefs. Produced by the leading artists, printmakers, and authors of their day these images were produced by men in a highly competitive market rooted in entertainment and escapism. There is limited evidence yet of how women actually experienced *shunga* and sexual culture in Japan at this period. It is known from some records of lending libraries that women did handle (No. 28) if not also read *shunga*, and evidence from foreign visitors to Japan in the Edo period that

shunga was openly sold and shared, including with foreign dignitaries who were taken aback by the Japanese's sexual openness. Edo society was based on entrenched class system and inequality and the world of sex would not have been immune from this.

Whilst *shunga* production flourished in the Edo Period (1600-1868) it had an Illegal but tolerated status after the 1722 *Kyoho* reforms. Edicts continued to be reinvoked throughout the Edo period but *shunga* continued to be produced in large number by most *ukiyo-e* artists. To escape the censors, works are almost always unsigned or signed using pseudonyms. In 1868, following the Meiji restoration, *shunga* was declared obscene and publication and public display banned. Although *shunga* continued to be produced during this period, it rapidly declined with the invention of the camera and with changing tastes and values. The prohibition on *shunga* also meant a prohibition on the study of *shunga* in Japan until 1990 when that ban was lifted. It was the British Museum's seminal and highly successful 2013 exhibition *Shunga: Sex and Pleasure in Japanese Art* that paved the way for further academic and commercial interest in *shunga* prints worldwide.

Sarah Boada

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A note on condition

Many the prints in this catalogue bear the marks of being handled. As *shunga* were most often distributed in book format and frequently through lending libraries, it is safe to assume that many of the prints collected by Peter Darach and presented in this exhibition bear the marks of use in this manner. It is not uncommon to see this type of wear on *shunga* in museums and the private market.

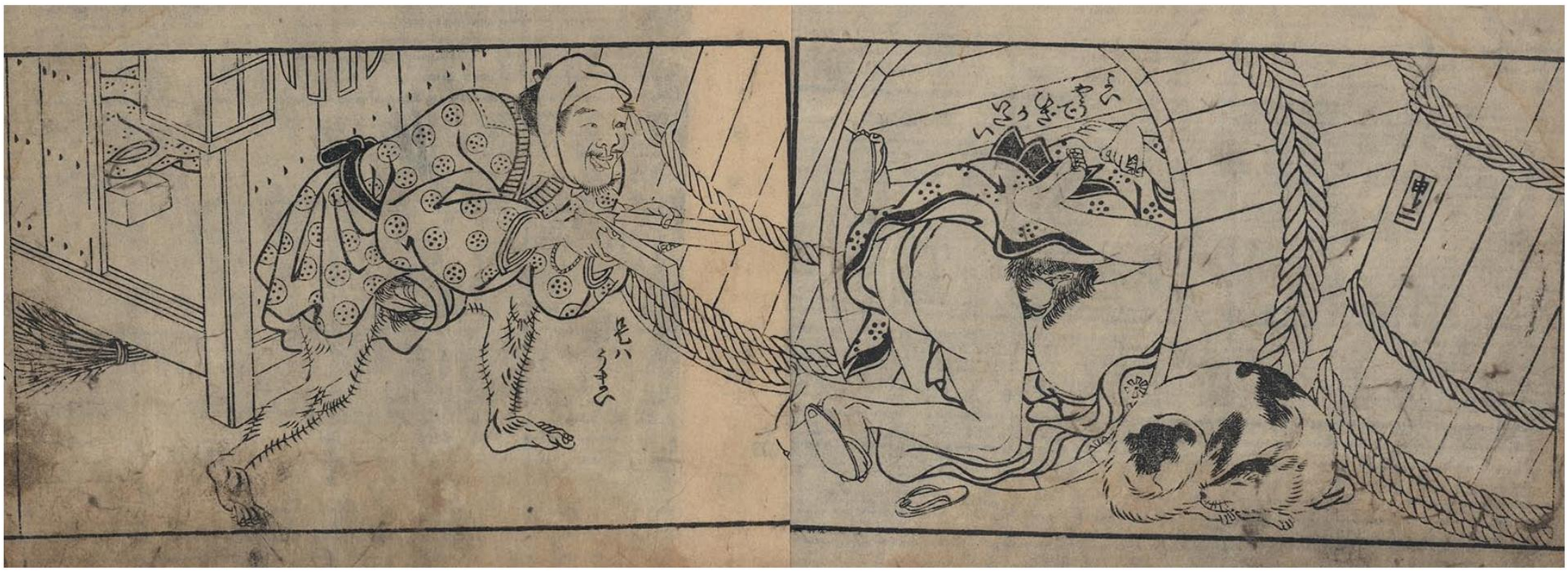
Peter Darach (nee Millband) was born in 1940 in Derbyshire. He grew up in the village of Spondon and went to grammar school in Belper. After he left school Peter worked in a rail testing lab at Derby Carriage and Wagon Works for three years before studying at Derby & District College of Art 1959-62. He then went on to study at the Royal College of Art 1962-65 where the RCA paid for him to study Bruegel paintings for work he was making. He later taught at Oxford School of Architecture and Manchester School of Art but left in September 1969 to become a full-time painter. Darach worked in Battersea in a derelict building while being supported by his first wife Maureen. In 1969 while on a camping trip the Isle of Skye they bought a croft in Sconser. Darach renovated the croft and stayed in Skye. He and Maureen separated in 1971. In 1973 he met Anne Marie Dinwiddie who was working in Sconser Lodge during her university break. She moved in with Darach in Battersea. They had their first child together, Tim, in 1975 and changed her surname to Darach after a stream in the Isle of Sky. Peter also started using this surname in 1977. They lived in Balham and then West Norwood in South London, where there second son Jack was born. In 1981, they moved to Bonnyton Farm, near Dunfermline. Two years later Anne died of cancer, aged 29. Peter had a one man show that year entitled "Me and my Family" in Aberdeen in 1983. He then returned to London where he remained for the next 40 years raising his two sons as a single parent while continuing to paint and draw. He married twice more and wrote seven anti-novels. He died in 2023.

Peter attributed a dream he had as a child for the reason he became an artist saying "I paint pictures because of a dream I had as a child. Each night for quite a long time (many weeks) – I as inexorably drawn to the entrance of the underworld – my experiences there shaped my life. I was powerless to resist the entrance and moved slowly towards it while still awake."

Peter described himself as a colour form painter rather than a figurative painter and saw *shunga* as the core of colour form. His works are clearly inspired by the ay *Ukiyo-e* print makers use of fabric and colour but also in the way they twist bodies in compositions. His collection stretches the period from the late 1700s through to the early 20th century. Peter had always had an interest in Japanese prints but only started collecting them in 2011. His collection covers the range of material from the mid 1700s through the early part of the 20th century and contains examples by some of the best known artists at the time.

Sarah Boada

I have worked with Japanese prints since 1997 when I started working at Earlham College Permanent Art Collection in Richmond, Indiana, USA while I was an undergraduate. Prior to this I had seen Japanese prints in galleries and in art books, and like many people in my age group in the alternative and punk music scene of 1990s US, I encountered more Japanese material through the medium of anime. I began working with Japanese prints professionally when I started working at Sanders of Oxford. At this time a large portion of the Japanese prints in the shop were provided by the collector and dealer Bernad Haase. Bernard regularly shared his rich knowledge and passion for these prints. It has been through my work at Sanders that I have expanded my knowledge of Japanese prints including on *Shunga* which I have sold over my 23 years at the shop. It is an honour and privilege to work with such a large collection of material and I felt it especially important as a woman to be able to work with, expand research, and curate this material no matter how challenging the subject matter is as part of the wider discourse on *shunga* but also to the discourse on erotica and sexual culture in art as a whole.



01. [The Barrel]
attributed to Tsukioka Settei (1726-1786)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1770
Double horizontal *Chubon* [each sheet ~140 x 200 mm]
unmounted

A late 18th century *shunga* print depicting a couple having sex in an overturned barrel. A dog is depicted curled up asleep next to the barrel as a man with hairy legs wearing a short jacket and head scarf sneaks up behind them holding two pieces of wood, which he is about to clap. The horizontal format of this print was popular in the late 1700s and was influenced by the *shunga* scroll painting formats where twelve images were made on a long horizontal roll.

Condition: Overall toning to paper, some soiling lower right and left corners, watermarks upper left and right margins and just into the image.
[53255]
£150

02. [The Sandal]
Attributed to Tsukioka Settei (1726-1786)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1770
Double horizontal *Chubon* [each sheet ~140 x 200 mm]
unmounted

A couple having sex either side of a curtain as a cat runs off with one of their sandals. This print is a perfect example of why *shunga* prints were known as "laughing pictures" through the inclusion of the foibles of life. The horizontal format of this print was popular in the late 1700s and was influenced by the *shunga* scroll painting formats where twelve images were made on a long horizontal roll.

Condition: Overall toning to paper, worm hole top centre left near central join of sheets, worm holes in central left and right margins not affecting the printed image, some soiling lower right and left corners, watermarks upper left and right margins and just into the image.
[53262]
£150

03. [In the bathhouse]
Harukawa Goshichi (c.1771-1831)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1815
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Fuzoko wakamizu*

A scarce print by the Osaka artist Harukawa Goshichi of a man and wife in a bathhouse. Naked figures appear in *ukiyo* prints but the concept of the nude as a genre in Japanese art did not appear until the introduction of Western painting styles after 1868. Scenes in bathhouses, however, are not uncommon in *ukiyo-e*, and appear in *shunga* regularly. There was a long history of mixed public bathing in Japan that was part of the fabric of society until it was outlawed in 1791. While more strictly enforced in Edo and Kyoto it was less enforced in rural areas. It has been noted that segregated bathing lead to more prying and peeping at bathhouses and fetishised seeing the other sex naked, thus heightening the sexual tension, taboo, and eroticism of these bathing prints.

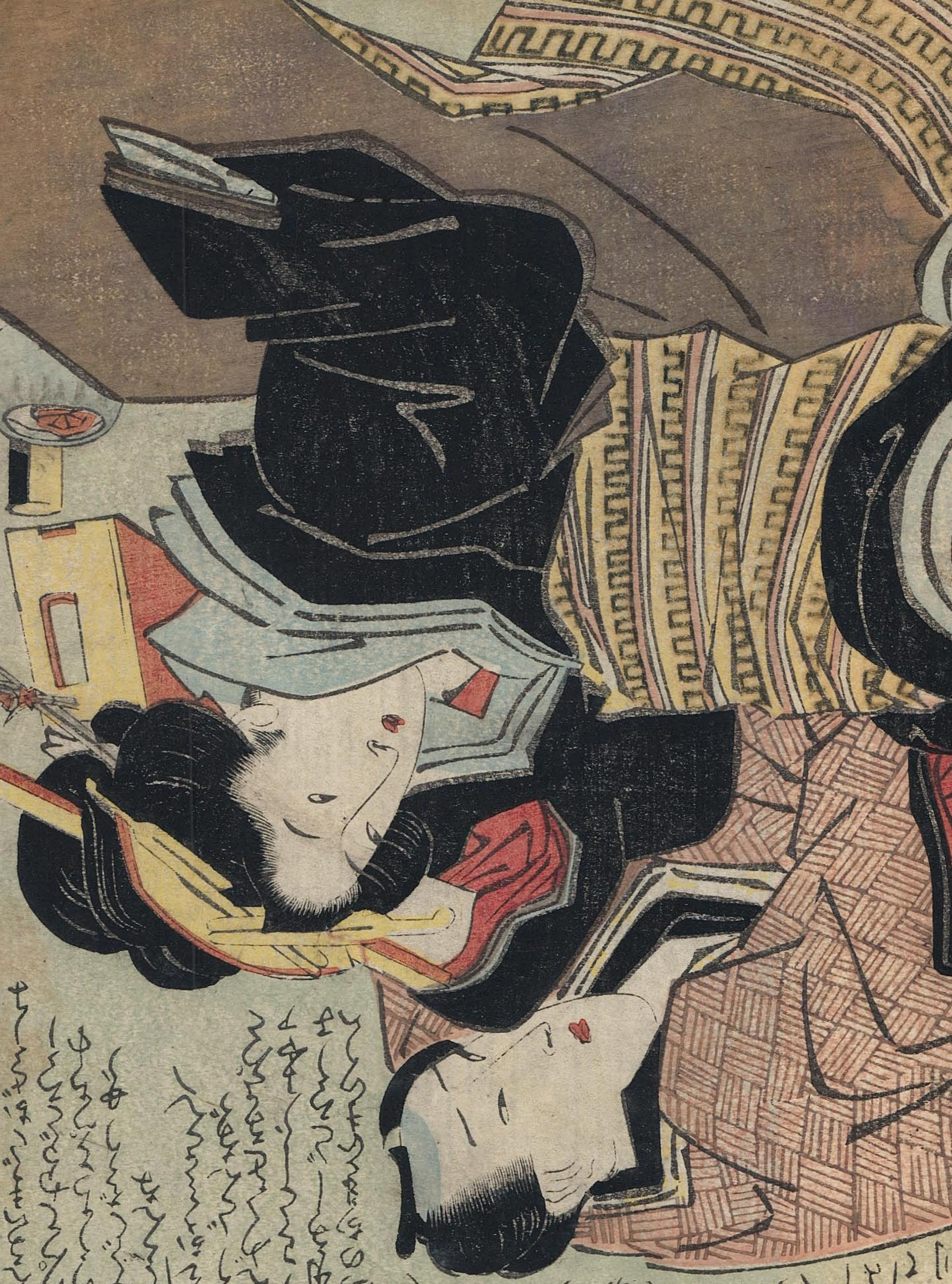
Condition: Some rubbing, and soiling lower right and left corners and to small worm holes lower right and left corners not affecting the image.
[53192]
£300

04. [Arousing]
Harukawa Goshichi (c.1776-1832)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1815
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Fuzoko wakamizu*

A scarce print by the Osaka artist Harukawa Goshichi of a man arousing a reclining geisha dressed in a black kimono with chrysanthemums on it. The scene is surrounded by lines of *kanji* script.

Condition: Some rubbing, and soiling lower right and left corners and to small worm holes lower right and left corners not affecting the image.
[53193]
£400



05. [Awabi Divers]

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1818-21
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Tsumagasane*: Overlapping Skirts

A scarce and famous print by Hokusai from Volume II of *Tsumagasane*: Overlapping Skirts depicting two *awabi* (abalone) divers, one using a sea cucumber as a dildo to pleasure the other whose eyes are closed and toes curled in pleasure, a smile on her lips. Similar to his print of an *awabi* diver with octopuses from his *Kinoe no komatsu* (1814) both in form and content, Hokusai revisits the themes of *awabi* divers, sexual pleasure, and sea creatures. Both prints present fantasies about the sexual freedom of *awabi* divers, who dove naked except for a loin cloth they wore tied with string. While they were considered to be less feminine as they were coarser in complexion and softness than courtesans and geishas, their nakedness and nature of their work meant they were associated with sexual freedom.

Whilst the vast majority of *shunga* depict heterosexual relationships, same sex relationships did appear and were not uncommon. Homosexuality was not frowned upon or outlawed in Japan except for the period between 1872-1881 when sodomy was banned. Sprinkled throughout albums, male-male intercourse is more often displayed and sometimes even bisexual relationships between two men and a woman. Scenes showing two women though are relatively rare. It is known that women did buy, read, and use *shunga* in addition to buying and using sex toys in the Edo period.

It was not uncommon that women would spend long periods of time in single sex spaces especially under the Shogunate system, in which their husbands would be required to spend long periods of time away from home. What is not known is if same sex relations between women were a result of these periods of same sex confinement or if active lesbianism existed. It is also not fully understood if the female-female scenes depicted in *shunga* were the result of male fantasy or representative of active lesbianism and as a result driven by a demand for such images by a female clientele.

Reference: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Uliyo-e Shunga) Database, Kyoto, KC/172/Ka, 004508750.
Condition: Some light creasing, rubbing and soiling lower right and left corners.
[53181]
£1,200

06. [Lovers]
Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1818-21
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Ehon Tamakazura: Jewelled Wig*

A scarce print from Volume II of Hokusai's *Ehon Tamakazura:* Jewelled Wig. The print features a man on his knees pleasuring a woman whose *obi* (belt) is unfurled below her, along with a hair pin which has fallen out of her hair. In the background koi swim in a small pond with a *kouhone* (water lilly).

Reference: The Pulverer Collection, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian, Washington D.C, FSC-GR-780.3.1-3
Condition: Some light creasing and overall surface dirt, rubbing and soiling lower right and left corners, a few worm holes. Faded.
[53183]
£550

07. [Pleasuring]

Utagawa Toyokuni [Toyokuni I] (1769 - 1825)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
1822
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Ôyogari no koe*: Call of Geese Meeting at Night
Writer: Piwihafu no Moemon pseudonym of Utei Enba II

A rarely available print from Volume II of Toyokuni I's three volume Ôyogari no koe: Call of Geese Meeting at Night, the first *shunga* book Toyokuni produced after a more than 20 year hiatus from the genre. This series contains 26 images with short erotic stories written by Utei Enba II. Here a man is pleasuring a woman using his right hand. Her *kimono* is open, she holds her left leg with her left arm, her eyes are closed and her toes curled in a moment of bliss.

The male figure wears a kimono with a plum blossom design, symbolic of everlasting love, and the woman's inner kimono has a pattern of *nadeshiko* (fringed pinks) symbolic of female genitalia. Behind the couple stands a screen decorated with *nanten* (heavenly bamboo). Surrounding the figures in the room unused and crumpled tissues lie in the foreground, a peony-patterned quilt lies behind, alongside a tobacco pipe and tray.
Printed using a subtle pallet where bright red ink has been used to highlight the woman's lips.

Reference: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Ukiyo-e Shunga) Database, Kyoto, KC/172/Ut, 004508784.
Condition: Some light soiling lower left and right corners. Some worm holes, mostly to internal gutter. Slightly faded.
[53176]
£275

08. [Ships beyond]

Utagawa Toyokuni [Toyokuni I] (1769 - 1825)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
1822
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Ôyogari no koe*: Call of Geese Meeting at Night
Writer: Piwihafu no Moemon pseudonym of Utei Enba II

A scarce print from Volume II of Toyokuni I's three volume Ôyogari no koe: Call of Geese Meeting at Night. This series contains 26 images with short erotic stories written by Utei Enba II. Here a man looks down at the woman he is making love to, his hands on his hips, his *kimono* open, with his *kiri* (paulownia) flower motif sash fallen behind him.

The woman is on her knees, her *kimono* pushed up, her face turned left as she rests her head on the cushion of a fallen *takamakura (raised sleeping pillow),* several of her hair pins have come out, she grips the cushion of the *takamakura,* her eyes shut and her mouth parted in a moment of pleasure. Crumpled tissues lie nearby, alongside a cup. Through the open window is a landscape over rooftops to the water beyond, with sails and masts of boats visible.

Reference: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Ukiyo-e Shunga) Database, Kyoto, KC/172/Ut, 004508784.
Condition: Some light soiling lower left and right corners, two worm holes top centre, slightly faded.
[53177]
£275

09. [Takeda Shingen and lover]
Utagawa Kunitora (c. 1803 - c. 1868)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
1824
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Ehon Senrikyô*

A print from Volume I of Kunitora's Ehon Senrikyô depicting the famous *daimyo* (lord) of Kai Provence during the Sengoku period. Takeda Shingen (1521-1573) was known as the Tiger of Kai. Here he is shown seated, with his tiger tail, his lover behind, whose *kimono* he has reached into to fondle her as she holds her right sleeve to her mouth, her hair long in the style of the Sengoku period.

Reference: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Ukiyo-e Shunga) Database, Kyoto, KC/172/En, 004854212.
Condition: Some very light soiling and rubbing lower right and left.
[53191]
£300

10. [Kabuki Theatre Audience]
Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786-1865)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1828
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: Chôchidori: *Haru no iro Soga no utsushie*: Butterflies and Plovers: The colours of spring

The seventh double page woodblock from Volume I of the series *Chochidori: Haru no iro Soga no utsushie*. In this print the viewer overlooks an audience in a *kabuki* theatre. The upper section of the print depicts people in the more expensive box seats including an old man who looks directly out at the viewer. Margarita Winkel postulates in *Japanese Erotic Fantasies: Sexual Imagery of the Edo Period* that this may be a playwright or artist with a *geisha* on his left. In the foreground the audience sits between the boxes and the *hanamichi* (flower path), the raised walkway that passed through the theatre and connected to the stage. Among this section of the audience a woman has lifted her *kimono* and covered her mouth with her kimono sleeve as the man seated in front of her pleasures her with his fingers.

This series has a number of images that contain *kabuki* actors and the title is an allusion to the popular tale of the Soga brothers, with the butterfly associated with Soga no Gorô and the plover with Soga no Jurô. This series is illustrative of the fact that *kabuki* actors were seen as *ukiyo* sex symbols whilst also alluding to the fact that they were also often sex workers catering to female and male clients. Winkel also posits the theory that it is possible that k*abuki* actors depicted in *shunga* may have been recognisable to the audience, but also suggests it was the role itself that was important to the eroticism.

Reference: The Gerhard Pulverer Collection: Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution Vol. 1, FSC-GR-780.20.1-3. Uhlenbeck, Christ and Margarita Winkel. J*apanese Erotic Fantasies: Sexual Imagery of the Edo Period*. Hotei Publishing, Amsterdam, 2005, page 189, 71c.
Condition: Some creasing, especially on the lower right sheet, and soiling and red stain lower left.
[53157]
£550

11. Odawara

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786-1865)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
1839
Hanshibon sheet [~222 x 155 mm]
mounted

Book Title: *Shunga Gojusan Tsugi Hana no Miyakoji*: Shunga Fifty-three Stations of the Flowering Road to the Capital
Author: Tamenga Shunui

A print from the three volume book *Irokurabe hana no miyakoj*i: Comparisons of Sex on the Flowery Road to the Capital, an example of a genre of *shunga* based on *meisho-ki (*guide books*)* and their equivalent print series depicting stops along travel routes. These erotic versions depict sexual encounters at various stops along the journey and in this case based on the 53 stations on the Tôkaidô Road. In this print a man and a woman kiss around a screen at night, the man has pushed his hand through the paper screen to reach through the woman's kimono. The woman's kimono is decorated with a wisteria pattern and her loosely tied obi has a peony motif partly printed in gold with metallic pigments. The inset *koma-e* (inset picture) depicts travellers outside of a stop at Odawara.

Reference: Screech, Timon. *Sex and the Floating World: Erotic Images in Japan 1700-1820*. Reaktion Books, London, Second Edition, 2009, p. 279, illus 138.
Condition: Some light creasing to sheet, soiling and light rubbing to lower left corner, binding holes as issued in right margin.
[53164]
£200

12. Fuji

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786-1865)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1839
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Shunga Gojusan Tsugi Hana no Miyakoji*: Shunga Fifty-three Stations of the Flowering Road to the Capital
Author: Tamenaga Shunsui pseudonym of Sasaki Sadataka

An *abuna-e* (suggestive print) from Kunisada's *Shunga Gojusan Tsugi Hana no Miyakoji*: Shunga Fifty-three Stations of the Flowering Road to the Capital. Here a man and woman are seated in a room with an open book, brazier, and a vase of flowers. The man embraces the woman from behind, he has his right hand in her right sleeve, a sexually suggestive pose as sleeves are a vaginal symbol. He uses his left hand to reach into her *kimono* to stimulate her. The woman has her left hand drawn to her mouth.

Behind the couple is a view of Mt. Fuji in the upper right and a *kamo-e* (inset picture) of travellers with Fuji behind them. The female figure wears a *fukiyose* patterned *kimono* that includes ginko leaves (symbol of Edo) and plum blossom, which are symbolic of autumn and blowing leaves, signalling the parting of these lovers as the man embarks on his journey away from Edo.

The inclusion of the plum blossoms, one of the three friends of winter, in the *kimono* motif represents both enduring love and the man's sexual virility.
This print is an example of a genre of *shunga* based on *meisho-ki (guide books)* and their equivalent print series depicting stops along travel routes. These erotic versions depict sexual encounters at various stops along the journey and in this case based on the 53 stations on the Tôkaidô Road.

Reference: Screech, Timon. *Sex and the Floating World: Erotic Images in Japan 1700-1820*, Reaktion Books, London, Second Edition, 2009, pg. 280.
Condition: Light rubbing to bottom corners of sheet.
[53189]
£400

13. Kawasaki

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786-1865)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1839
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Shunga Gojusan Tsugi Hana no Miyakoji*: Shunga Fifty-three Stations of the Flowering Road to the Capital
Author: Tamenaga Shunsui pseudonym of Sasaki Sadataka

A print from Kunisada's *Shunga Gojusan Tsugi Hana no Miyakoji*: Shunga Fifty-three Stations of the Flowering Road to the Capital. Here a woman pulls a quilt over the naked and aroused man as she lies down, her *kimono* open and her vagina exposed with her head on a *takamakura* (raised sleeping pillow), tissues lie to her right. In the background a sake set, a pipe, and tobacco pouch lie behind her, before a screen decorated with a sparrow and wisteria.

A snowy landscape is visible on the right and a *kamo-e* (inset picture) of Kawasaki. This print is an example of a genre of *shunga* based on *meisho-ki (guide books)* and their equivalent print series depicting stops along travel routes. These erotic versions depict sexual encounters at various stops along the journey and in this case based on the 53 stations on the Tôkaidô Road.

Reference: Screech, Timon. *Sex and the Floating World: Erotic Images in Japan 1700-1820*, Reaktion Books, London, Second Edition, 2009, pg 280.
Condition: Some rubbing lower left and right corners. Two worm holes to centre of image.
[53190]
£300

14. [Two lovers behind a screen]
Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
after Tenpo 8 (1837)
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series Title: *Gyokueki chiwa hannah ikada*: Clusters of Flowers by a Stream
Author: Kôshoku Gaishi pseudonym of Hanagasa Bunkyô in collaboration with Adano Sanjin

A print from Volume I of Kunyoshi's *Gyokueki chiwa hannah ikada*: Clusters of Flowers by a Stream. Two lovers peer around a screen, through an open sliding door, at the back of a woman walking in the opposite direction. The man holds his lover's right leg, exposing her. Folded tissues lie in front of them. A blue and white bowl on a red lacquer tray, sake in box, a pipe, and a tobacco pouch lie on the other side of the screen. Two comic figures can be seen through the open widow gathering lotus, the man on the right is seated in the boat and the other, left, is in the water holding a lotus leaf.

The inclusion of the scene in the background is multifaceted. Sex and the floating world are ubiquitously associated with water in *shunga* prints. In Japanese culture water is considered a *yin* or feminine element because it is moist, dark, and recessive. The commercial sex trade was and still is referred to as the 'water trade' (*mizu-shobai*). Additionally, the Yoshiwara district in Edo was best and most commonly reached by boat. In this print the association would have been immediately apparent to the contemporaneous Japanese observer as the scene in the print depicts a man and a geisha in a brothel.

The background also serves as a comic element. *Shunga* prints were also called *warai-e* (laughing pictures) which is a double entendre for masturbation, but in early *shunga* it was embraced literally and comic elements were included in many of the images. In this print the presence of two lower class genre figures gathering lotus presumably just outside of the brothel where a man of a high class is engaging the services of a geisha is meant to be funny and cause laughter.

Yet there is still another layer to the joke. In Japan the lotus is a symbol of life and death and purity, as is it is able to rise above its muddy water. The lotus also represents transient beauty. In this print the lotus is equated with the commercial sex trade in the Yoshiwara. The bliss of lovemaking is a beautiful transient moment, like the lotus, and indeed the beauty of the geisha herself. Yet, at the same time this association likens the floating world and sex trade to muddy/impure waters and that joke is emphasised by the inclusion of this genre scene.

Reference: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Ukiyo-e Shunga) Database, Kyoto, KC/172/Ka, 001271113. The Gerhard Pulverer Collection, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian, Washington D.C, FSC-GR-780.26.1-3
Condition: Some rubbing and light soiling lower right and left corners.
[53186]
£400

15. [Peeping]
Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1829
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Hiyaku mon futari furisod:* At Shichikichisa, two long-sleeved kimonos.

Image five from Kuniyoshi's *Hiyaku mon futari furisode* of an old man peeping through a sliding window at a couple engaged in sex. In the background a mouse sits next to a lamp below a line of hanging clothes also watching the scene at hand.

People watching others is a common theme in *shunga*. As well as heightening the sexual tension of the image it is meant to make the viewer self aware of their own voyeurism. The presence of voyeurs is also indicative of the tight living conditions of Edo Japan meaning that people would be in close proximity to one another, no matter what they were doing, and frequently just beyond a sliding panel or open window.

Condition: Some rubbing and soiling lower right and left corners and light stains to top of left and right margins.
[53188]
£200

16. [Two Women Pleasuring Each Other]
Utagawa Kuninao (1793-1854)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1830
Two *kohon* sheets [each sheet ~170 x 120 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Imoseyama*: Mountains of Husband and Wife

A rare print from Volume I of Utagawa Kuninao's *Imoseyama*: Mountains of Husband and Wife. The title of this series is a reference to the kabuki play *Imoseyama Onna Teikin*: Mt Imo and Mt Se: A Tale of Womanly Virtue which has been called the Japanese version of Romeo and Juliet. In this print two women are shown pleasuring each other with a *tagaigata* (double-sided dildo). A quilt slips off the woman on top as she embraces the woman below with both her arms. The woman below wears a *kimono* with plovers on it and lies on a matt decorated with a plum and vine pattern. On the floor in the foreground is a woodblock print of the actor Seki Sanjûrô III under his stage name Ichikawa Dankichi I, as well as an open box, a tea cup and pot, and used tissues.

It is interesting to note the presence of a *yakusha-e* (actor print) within this print. *Kabuki* actors were sex symbols during the Edo period in addition to also often being sex workers catering to both male and female patrons. Margarita Winkel, in the book *Japanese Erotic Fantasies: Sexual Imagery of the Edo Period,* posits the theory that it is possible that *kabuki* actors depicted in *shunga* may have been recognisable to the audience, but also suggests it was the role portrayed that was important to the eroticism. Seki Sanjûrô III played the role of Kogansuke in *Imoseyama Onna Teikin,* the play which this print series title references, under his stage name Ichikawa Dankichi I in 1830.
In this print the actor was named within a work that references this specific play and thus, evidence of Winkel's theory. Simultaneously, the presence of Seki Sanjûrô III in the print helps to date this print to 1830 rather than the previous allocated date of c. 1827.

Whilst the vast majority of *shunga* depict heterosexual relationships, same sex relationships did appear and were not uncommon. Homosexuality was not frowned upon or outlawed in Japan except for the period between 1872-1881 when sodomy was banned. Sprinkled throughout albums, male-male intercourse is more often displayed and sometimes even bisexual relationships between two men and a woman. Scenes showing two women though are relatively rare. It is known that women did buy, read, and use *shunga* in addition to buying and using sex toys in the Edo period. It was not uncommon that women would spend long periods of time in single sex spaces especially under the Shogunate system, in which their husbands would be required to spend long periods of time away from home. What is not known is if same sex relations between women were a result of these periods of same sex confinement or if active lesbianism existed. It is also not fully understood if the female-female scenes depicted in *shunga* were the result of male fantasy or representative of active lesbianism and as a result driven by a demand for such images by a female clientele.

References: International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, Ehon (Ukiyo-e Shunga) Database, Serial Number 48. Shagan, Ofer. *Japanese Erotic Art: The hidden world of Shunga*, Thames & Hudson, 2013, p. 329.
Condition: Some rubbing and soiling to lower right and left corners. Worm holes to top centre margin.
[53171]
£650

17. [Threesome]
Keisai Eisen (1790-1848)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
Tenpo 7 (1836)
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Iro jiman edomurasaki*: Tales of Sexual Conquest and the Violet of Edo

A print from Volume II of Eisen's *Iro jiman edo murasaki*: Tales of Sexual Conquest and the Violet of Edo. In this print a man is having a threesome with two *geishas* amongst discarded *kimonos*. A *geisha* lies on the floor naked, with the man's right arm holding her leg up and his left hand on her left breast, used and unused tissues lie by his knees. The *geisha*'s head lies on a *takamakura* (raised sleeping pillow) her head tipped back and her mouth open in bliss, another *takamakura* lies toppled over, and hair pins and comb lie on the floor behind her. The *geisha* behind the couple crouches in her loosened, red peony decorated *kimono*. Her right hand touches the face of the *geisha* lying down and holds a cup in her other hand.

Condition: Some rubbing and light soiling to lower left and right corners
[53168]
£400

18. *Ji Ko Ku Kai No tú*: Jinkyo's Bitter Purchase

Keisai Eisen (1790-1848)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
Tenpo 7 (1836)
Three *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Iro jiman edomurasaki*: Tales of Sexual Conquest and the Violet of Edo

A rare *shikake-hon* (trick moving picture) from Volume I Eisen's *Iro jiman edo murasaki*: Tales of Sexual Conquest and the Violet of Edo, a story about a man who loves women more than food. This print is set upstairs in a low class brothel where a man has sex with an older woman next to a screen with turtles painted on it. The woman lies back with her left arm resting on a *takamakura* (raised sleeping pillow), naked, her *kimono* draped over the screen. A red fan with a butterfly lies to her right. The man still wears his *kimono* and is pinching his nose with his left hand and lies back resting on his right *hand*. Used tissues and a part-open fan lie to next to them.

Behind them is another couple, the woman clutching at a man's *kimono*. In the background are a tea pot, sake, and food, as well as a screen with panels each depicting iris, chrysanthemum, bamboo, and a plum tree. A cat holding a fish in its mouth runs down the stairs as an old woman peers up between the stairs and the upstairs floor.

When the page is opened the old woman has seen what is happening and is laughing at the first couple, the reclining *geisha* holds the butterfly fan in front of her face, the couple in the background have put up the screen, the man's *kimono* is draped over it, and he and the *geisha* lie locked in an embrace amongst crumpled tissues and *takamakura*.

Reference: Honolulu Museum of Art, Asian Art: Japanese Books and Manuscripts, Object number: 2016-56-041.01.
Condition: Rubbing and soiling to lower left and right corners, creasing to centre of moving top sheet, right edge of the non-moving sheet has been trimmed.
[53173]
£350

19. [Peony Season]
after Keisai Eisen (1790-1848)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1838-40
Two *Hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
unmounted

Series: *Shunshoku hana no shizuku:* Erotic Drops of Flower Petals

A print from Volume I of *Shunshoku hana no shizuku:* Erotic Drops of Flower Petals depicting a man having a threesome with two women. In the top left a *kamo-e* (inset picture) depicts butterflies and peonies.

This print is very similar to an example attributed to Eisen on stylistic grounds by Jack Hillier in the Pulverer Collection. The book in the Pulverer Collection is signed "*Gonomon Shunjono*" of *Shunjoshin*, but no artist has been linked to this name.

Although compositionally identical, this impression has been simplified and altered including the omission of the printed title for the *kamo-e*. Metallic inks and elaborate colour printing has still been used but the alterations to the fabric patterns and objects surrounding the lovers points towards a recarved edition after Eisen's original design.

Reference: The Gerhard Pulverer Collection, FSC-GR-780.5.1-4
Condition: Some slight rubbing, lower left corner.
[53166]
£250

20. *Yokidoke no shizuku*: Drops of Melting Snow

attributed to Keisai Eisen (1790-1848)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1838-40
Two *hanshibon* sheets [each sheet ~222 x 155 mm]
framed

Series: *Shunshoku hana no shizuku:* Erotic Drops of Flower Petals

The fourth double page image from Volume III of Eisen's *Shunshoku hana no shizuku:* Erotic Drops of Flower Petals, depicting an amorous couple toppling over in the snow. The woman is dressed in a heavy winter over *kimono*, a *zukin* (hood), and tall *geta* (sandals). Holding an open parasol, the woman's left sandal has come off and her lantern topples over next to her, the open parasol symbolic of the vulnerability of her exposed vagina. The man above has his left arm around the back of the woman as he holds her left leg up with is right hand. The inset *koma-e* (inset picture) is reminiscent of a Hiroshige landscape and includes the inscription, "all covered in snow" a double-entendre regarding the unfolding scene.

A deluxe printing in rich colour with *karazuri* (blind stamping), *tsuyazumi* (lacquer printing), and mica dust. This print has been attributed to Eisen based on stylistic grounds by Jack Hillier, at the Pulverer Collection, specifically the floral cartouches and facial expressions of the figures. One of the pages in the series is signed "Gonomon Shunjono" of Shunjoshin, but no artist has been linked to this name.

Reference: Pulverer Collection, FSC-GR-780.5.1-4., Ulhenbeck, Chris and Margarita Winkel, *Japanese Erotic Fantasies*, Hotei Publishing, p. 166.
Condition: Small pinhole in sky.
[53146]
£850

21. Dialogues in the Bedroom: *Suruga*
Utagawa School
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1840
Yatsugiri-ban [~95 x 127 mm]
mounted

Series: Dialogues in the Bedroom

A deluxe separately published print depicting a couple seated on the ground, the man is pleasuring a woman who wears a *zukin* (hood), and tall *geta* (sandals). A cat lies curled up asleep in the background left. The deluxe printing includes extensive *gauffrage* giving the bodies of the man and woman a three dimensional element.

This size of *shunga* print was usually sold in sets of twelve in paper wrappers and often given as gifts at New Year in a similar fashion to *surimono* (privately commissioned greetings cards). As with *surimono*, these prints have been made using deluxe printing methods such as a large range of colours, complex patterns, and metallic pigments.

Condition: Minor staining.
[53220]
£180

22. Dialogues in the Bedroom: *Gan*

Utagawa School
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1840
Yatsugiri-ban [~95 x 127 mm]
mounted

Series: Dialogues in the Bedroom

A deluxe separately published print featuring a couple toppling to the ground in an embrace. Both wear *zukin* (hoods), and tall *geta* (sandals), and padded winter *kimonos*. The man's right *geta* has fallen off and the lovers clasp hands, a closed parasol, symbolic of male sexuality and prowess, rests besides the couple to the right. The deluxe printing includes extensive *gauffrage* giving the bodies of the man and woman a three dimensional element.

This size of *shunga* print was usually sold in sets of twelve in paper wrappers and often given as gifts at New Year in a similar fashion to *surimono* (privately commissioned greetings cards). As with *surimono*, these prints have been made using deluxe printing methods such as a large range of colours, complex patterns, and metallic pigments.

Condition: Minor staining
[53221]
£180

23. [Lovers]
Utagawa School
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1840
Yatsugiri-ban [~95 x 127 mm]
mounted

A print by an unknown artist of a couple kissing in an amorous embrace amongst their richly decorated *kimonos*.

This size of *shunga* print was usually sold in sets of twelve in paper wrappers and often given as gifts at New Year in a similar fashion to *surimono* (privately commissioned greetings cards). As with *surimono*, these prints have been made using deluxe printing methods such as a large range of colours, complex patterns, and metallic pigments.

Condition: Minor time toning
[53236]
£180

24. Chionin Temple
Utagawa School
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1840
Yatsugiri-ban [~95 x 127 mm]
mounted

An Utagawa School print of a man and woman reclined. The man is pleasuring her with his right hand as he lifts her *kimono* with his left hand. She bites her *kimono* sleeve, her toes curled in pleasure. In the background is the Chionin Temple in Kyoto with cherry trees blossoming.

This size of *shunga* print was usually sold in sets of twelve in paper wrappers and often given as gifts at New Year in a similar fashion to *surimono* (privately commissioned greetings cards). As with *surimono*, these prints have been made using deluxe printing methods such as a large range of colours, complex patterns, and metallic pigments.

Condition: Small loss to upper right corner of sheet not affecting the image
[53250]
£180

25. [Acrobats]

Attributed to Utagawa Kunimori II (1827-1899)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1850
Chûhon sheet [~180 x 120 mm]
mounted

A rare and unusual comic *shunga* depicting acrobats having sex on a tight rope while a comic genre figure points at them from below. In this print a male acrobat dressed in a richly patterned costume precariously balances on a tight rope, holding his pole behind him while having sex with a female tight rope walker. The female is dressed as a *Sanbasô*, a *kabuki* role, she wears a *kago* hat with the rising sun and holds a fan. Her winged patterned *kimono*, with bells on the shoulders, has been lifted and her leg extended, exposing his and her genitalia.

Acrobatics were brought to Japan from China in the 600s AD. Initially acrobatics mostly consisted of wire and paper walking. Feats of acrobatics were sponsored by aristocrats and military leaders as a type of religious entertainment and incorporated into *kabuki* during the Muromachi period (1392–1573). Tightrope or wire walking was referred to as *kumomai* (spider dancing) and was originally performed by women. With the increased urbanisation in Edo and Kyoto during the Edo period, acrobatics were performed in these urban centres for all classes of society.

The joke in this print as with many *shunga* is multilayered. *Karuwaza* is the Japanese word for acrobatics and generally refers to juggling, wire walking, tumbling, and perch acrobatics. The word is made of two parts: *karu* means light or agile and the second kanji *waza* means “trick”or “business” with secondary meaning “risky business.”

In this print the act of intercourse is quite literally “risky business” both in and of itself, and doubly so as a feat of literal acrobatics on the tightrope. When juggling and acrobatics were performed in the Edo period they were called hôka which means “release” and something “below” and here the release will be in the act of coitus while we view them from below, a point emphasised by the man pointing from under the acrobats.

The costume of the female acrobat also plays its part. She is dressed as a *Sanbasô,* which is a role that originates from *Noh* where the actor dances like a marionette. In mid dance, it appears that a string breaks and he begins to dance clumsily. A stage assistant rushes out in a panic to mend it, and the dance continues. The accompany song lyrics celebrate the new year and ask for prosperity, the dance continues and the *Sanbasô* does a seed sowing dance shaking the bells as if sewing rice along to further sexually suggestive lyrics. In this print, the parallels of coitus and rice sowing are meant to add a further layer of sexual joke and pun.

Reference: Rudlin, Pernille. The origins of acrobatics (karuwaza) in Japan. Digital museum of Japan-UK show business. https://ninjin.co.uk/2022/06/20/the-origins-of-acrobatics-karuwaza-in-japan/
Condition: Binding holes in margin as issued.
[53252]
£250

26. Misima, Numazu
Koikawa Shozan (1821-1907)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1850
Two chûhon sheets [each sheet ~180 x 120 mm]
unmounted

Series: The Fifty-three Stations of the Tôkaidô Road

A print from Koikawa Shozan's The Fifty-three Stations of the Tôkaidô Road. Here a man and woman are having sex standing up against pine tree, the man's hat and travel bundles are discarded behind him. The background features a view of Misima on the right and Numazu on the left. This print is an example of a genre of *shunga* based on *meisho-ki (guide books)* and their equivalent print series depicting stops along travel routes. These erotic versions depict sexual encounters at various stops along the journey and in this case based on the 53 stations on the Tôkaidô Road.

Condition: Rubbing and light soiling to lower left and right corners
[53212]
£200

27. Fuchû, Mariko
Koikawa Shozan (1821-1907)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1850
Two chûhon sheets [each sheet ~180 x 120 mm]
unmounted

Series: The Fifty-three Stations of the Tôkaidô Road

A print from Koikawa Shozan's The Fifty-three Stations of the Tôkaidô Road. Here a woman reclines, her *kimono* open leaving her exposed while the aroused man who crouches above her, also exposed, holds her *kimono* closed at the top with his left hand as he looks over his right shoulder. To the side of them sits a tea set, and behind them views of Fuchû on the right and Mariko on the left. This print is an example of a genre of *shunga* based on *meisho-ki (guide books)* and their equivalent print series depicting stops along travel routes. These erotic versions depict sexual encounters at various stops along the journey and in this case based on the 53 stations on the Tôkaidô Road.

Condition: Rubbing and soiling to lower left and right corners.
[53213]
£175

鞠子

其の表

其の裏

28. [The Other Side]
Koikawa Shozan (1821-1907)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1850
Chûhon sheet [~180 x 120 mm]
mounted

Series: *Geisha no omote - sono ura*: The Respectable Appearance of a Geisha - and Her Other Side

An unusual composition and print from Shozan's *Geisha no omote - sono ura*: The Respectable Appearance of a Geisha - and Her Other Side. In this print a *geisha* is pleasuring herself with a *harigata* (dildo), her eyes closed in bliss with her head resting on a *shunga* book. In the foreground is an overturned *takamakura* (raised sleeping pillow) alongside a storage box for the *harigata,* a blue and white bowl, and a tea pot. The composition has been divided diagonally with a scene above depicting three men observing the same geisha on the street.

Condition: Rubbing and soiling to lower left and right corners.
[53263]
£200

29. [Lovers]
Attributed to Toyohara Chikanobu (1838-1912)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1890
Chuban [~190 x 255 mm]
framed

A Meiji Era *shunga* in the style of Chikanobu featuring two seated lovers in mid coitus. The woman crouches over her lover wearing a *kimono* with *kikyo* (campanula bell flower) motif, a symbol of honesty, obedience, and unchangeable love. The background features a folding screen with a white anemone on it, beyond which another woman watches through the sliding doors holding her left *kimono* sleeve to her mouth.

The Meiji Era marked the end of the Shogunate, the restoration of the Imperial Family, and the full opening of Japan to the West. As Japan opened up, the Meiji administration sought to bring Japanese societal practices in line with Western standards of morality. These factors had several effects on Meiji *shunga* output.

As Japanese society became more open tastes changed at the same time that artists began to be schooled in Western styles. Printmakers of *ukiyo-e* no longer produced any prints, but other forms of *shunga* were still being made through the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. This material was still being produced using deluxe printing methods, but it was stylistically simpler and more often produced as suites of prints and painting rather than in book format.

Condition: Minor dirt staining to bottom right edge of sheet
[53272]
£300

30. From *Izumo No Chigri*: Pledge of Izumo

attributed to Terasaki Kôgyô (1866-1919)
Woodblock (nishiki-e)
c. 1900
Chuban [~190 x 255 mm]
framed

Series: *Izumo No Chigri*: Pledge of Izumo

A print from a set of Meiji *shunga* prints attributed to Terasaki Kôgyô, *Izumo No Chigri*: Pledge of Izumo. In this print a woman pleasures herself while looking at a *shunga* album in front of a silver screen decorated with a crane motif. Lavishly printed using metallic inks and multiple colours, the woman's face has been tinted to show her heightened state of excitement.

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Reference: Clark, Timothy. *Shunga: Sex and Pleasure in Japanese Art*. The British Museum, 2013, pg. 472.
Condition: Black ink stain upper centre right margin. Printed tight to margin on lower right.
[53199]
£300

Artists, Printmakers, & Publishers
BIOGRAPHIES

Hanagasa Bunkyô (1785-1860) was an Edo playwright and author. After studying under Tsuruya Nanboku IV he became a *kabuki* playwright but after failing to find success he became a writer of popular fiction. He went on to write erotic texts for Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, and Eisen. Koshoku Gaishi was a pen name for Hanagasa Bunkyo.

Toyohara Chikanobu (1838-1912) was a student of Toyohara Kunichika (not to be confused with the Kunichika Toyohara (1835-1900) of the same name). Originally Hashimoto, he took both the last name and the second part "chika" of his master's first name. This followed an old tradition of students inheriting the already established names of their masters. Favourite subjects of Chikanobu were historical and mythological legends and histories from Japan's past and genre scenes with women and children. The percentage of triptychs among the prints created by the artist is maybe higher than for any other artist of the Meiji period. His best known series are triptychs showing court life in and around the Chiyoda Palace. Like Chikanobu's contemporary, Yoshitoshi, his print themes concentrate on the history and traditional values of old Japan. These series must be seen against the background of an era when Japan was striving to adopt Western technology and culture.

Keisai Eisen (1790-1848) was a *ukiyo-e* artist born in Hoshigaoka in Edo Japan. The son of the samurai, poet, and calligrapher Ikeda Masahei Shigeharu, Eisen studied painting in the Kanô style under Kanô Hakkeisai from whom he got the name Keisai. He then went on to train as a *kabuki* playwright. After the death of his father, he lodged with the family of Kikugawa Eizan. It was then that Eisen became interested in *ukiyo-e* and studied under Eiji, Eizan's father. It was also at this time that he became interested in the work of Hokusai who heavily influenced his style.

Eisen specialised in *bijin-ga* (pictures of beautiful women), including his *o-kubi-e* (large head pictures) and full length portraits, also made landscapes and pictures of famous places contributing 24 designs to Kisokaidô rokujûkyû-tsugi: Sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidô Road, c. late 1830s) designed with Hiroshige. He designed many erotic prints and book illustration as well as compiling medical texts and sex manuals into the four volume *(Keichu kibun) Makura bunko:* Heard and Recorded in the Bedroom: Pillow Library.

In addition to prints, painting, and book illustrations Eisen also wrote novels, plays, history books, legends and biographies notably the second edition of *Ukiyo-e Ruiko* (History of Prints of the Floating World) which contains the most comprehensive collection of biographies of *ukiyo-e* artists including himself in which he describes himself as a heavy drinker and claimed to have owned a brothel in Nazu in the 1830s.

Utei Enba II (1792-1869) was an Edo author of popular fiction. He also wrote a number of successful erotic books which he produced in collaboration with members of the Utagawa School including Toyokuni I and Kunisada. The works he collaborated on contain numerous novel devices to entice and entertain readers such as the inclusions of ghost, scandals involving *kabuki* actors, and trick pictures. His pen name was Enkobo Tsukinari.

Harukawa Goshichi (c.1771-1831) was an Osaka *ukiyo-e* print maker.

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) is the most famous *ukiyo-e* printmaker and is considered the prime consolidator of Western and Japanese styles. Born in Edo (now Tokyo), Hokusai is best known as author of the woodblock print series Thirty-six Views of Mount: Fuji Fugaku Sanjûroku-kei which includes the internationally recognised print, The Great Wave off Kanagawa. He was not a prolific producer of *shunga* but his print of an *awabi* diver with octopuses from his *Kinoe no komatsu* is the most famous *shunga* image.

Terasaki Kôgyô (1866-1919) was a Nihonga painter. Born in Dewa Province, he began painting at the age of 16. By the age of 20, he went to study at the Kano School and then the Shijô School. He was a professor of art at Tokyo School of Fine Art and also designed illustrations for the Meiji period art journal Kaiga sôshi.

Utagawa Kunimori II (1827-1899) was an Edo print maker and a pupil of Utagawa Kunisada.

Utagawa Kuninao (1793-1854) was an *ukiyo-e* artist in Edo active in the first half of the 19th century. A pupil of Toyokuni I he produced portraits of actors, landscapes, and *bijin-ga* (prints of beautiful women). He produced at least three *shunga* works between 1827 and 1831.

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (1786-1865) was the most popular, prolific and financially successful designer of *ukiyo-e* woodblock print in 19th century Japan producing over 20,000 print designs as well as illustrated books. In his own time, his reputation far exceeded that of his contemporaries, Hokusai, Hiroshige and Kuniyoshi. The artist started his career as a pupil of Toyokuni I whose name he adopted in 1844 as Toyokuni III. Almost from the first day of his activity to until his death in 1865, Kunisada was a trend setter in the art of the Japanese woodblock print. Always at the vanguard of his time, and in tune with the tastes of the public, he continuously developed his style, which was sometimes radically changed, and did not adhere to stylistic constraints set by any of his contemporaries.

He was not only a brilliant print maker but also an excellent business man who had great commercial success. Following the traditional pattern of the Utagawa School, Kunisada's main occupation was *kabuki* and actor prints, and about sixty percent all of his designs fall in this category. Notable students of his include Toyohara Kunichika, Utagawa Sadahide and Utagawa Kunisada II. From, the 1820s Kunisada produced approximately fifty erotic works. Many of his works were conceived and designed with author and poet Utei Enba II (1792-1862). Kunisada made several erotic parodies of popular novels including erotic versions of The Tales of Genji. Kunisada's *shunga* output is notable for the great attention to the settings of the *shunga* scenes including elaborate fabric patterns, porcelain, smoking sets, and the use of the most elaborate printing methods available at the time including embellishment with gold and silver pigments, mother of pearl, mica, lacquer printing, and gauffrage.

Utagawa Kunitora (c.1803 - c.1868) was an Edo *ukiyo-e* artist and a student of Toyokuni I. He specialised in illustrations for serialized gôkan novels, a typed of graphic novel. He produced several series of shunga and is known for his unique style of up close and distant views in the same image.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861) joined the famous Utagawa School, then headed by the great master Toyokuni Utagawa I (1769 - 1825) at the age of fourteen. According to other sources, he had been trained by Katsukawa Shuntei before this. In 1814 he took the name Kuniyoshi and became an independent artist. Kuniyoshi achieved his commercial and artistic breakthrough in 1827 with the first six designs of the series The Hundred and Eight Heroes of the Suikoden. The series was about one hundred and eight rebels and honorary bandits, based on an old Chinese novel from the fourteenth century. The story was very popular in Japan. The artist continued with this pattern of success and concentrated on print subjects of warriors and heroes. He was even nicknamed Warrior Print Kuniyoshi. After being financially settled, he turned to other subjects - ghost stories, comic prints, landscapes, beautiful women and actor prints.

The artist also tried his luck with another subject, natural life prints, showing animals like birds, fish and cats. These kinds of new subjects, like the landscape print, had first been made popular by Ando Hiroshige. Since the early 1840s, Kuniyoshi prints show some influence of western style painting and printmaking. The artist possessed a collection of western engraving prints. He admired them as much as the European Impressionist artists would admire Japanese woodblock prints later. Western influence can be found in Kuniyoshi prints in several ways: the use of the Western perspective, the way he designed clouds and the way he tried to show the effects of light and shadow. In terms of his *shunga* output he produced at least 43 known titles during his career with titles recorded 1829-1857 and he depicted the full range of Edo couplings in this work. Kuniyoshi used the following pseudonyms: Nekoyoshi (cats are good), Hakubyôkai Hodoyoshi (happy keeper of white cats), Gobyôtei Hodoyoshi (five cat home–just right), and Sanbentei Nekoyoshi (the Sanbentei cat lover).

Tsukioka Settei (1726-1786) was an *ukiyo-e* artist from the Ômi province and lived and worked mainly in Osaka. An influential figure in the Kamigata, the area of western Japan that included Kyoto and Osaka, he is seen as equally important as Sukenobu. Seetei studied painting in the style of the Kano School. Originally he focused on designing illustrations for woodblock illustrated books. He was a master of *shunga* and his work was rumoured to have the power to prevent fire. Many of his books were parodies of educational books for women which has the underlying theme that women should gain pleasure from sex.

Koikawa Shozan (1821-1907) was an Edo printmaker who worked in the Edo and Meiji periods and seems to have only made *shunga* prints.

Tamenaga Shunsui (1790-1844) was the pen name of Sasaki Sadataka, a Japanese novelist of the Edo period. Primarily specialising in ninjôbon (books about human feelings), a type of sentimental romance story, he produced his first book in 1819. Shunshi also wrote a number of erotic versions of ninjôbon works and collaborated with several woodblock artists including Kunisada and Shigenobu. During the Tenpô reforms (1841-3) he was found guilty of writing obscene material and was sentenced to 50 days in manacles. Kunisada was spared prosecution and had left Edo for a pilgrimage to Ise when he found out the severity of the situation. After his release, Shunshui suffered from alcoholism and a rapid mental decline which lead to his death in 1844.

Utagawa Toyokuni I (1769-1825) was one of the leading figures of Japanese woodblock printmaking. Born in Edo, he was the son of Kurahashi Gorobei an important carver of dolls and puppets specialising in *kabuki* figures. After showing talent at painting from a young age, Toyokuni was apprenticed to Utagawa Toyoharu (1735-1814) founder of the Utagawa School and a nearby neighbour. Toyokuni was a master of actor prints, but also specialised in *bijin-ga*. He trained Kunisada and Kuniyoshi and was a key figure in generating the prosperous early nineteenth century Edo *ukiyo-e* print market. Toyokuni produced a few *shunga* works in the 1790s but ceased to produce any more for a twenty year period until 1822 when he produced *Oyogari no koe*. It was after he produced this work that fellow Utagawa artists followed his lead and began to produce *shunga*.

The Utagawa School was the largest school of *ukiyo-e* art founded by Utagawa Toyoharu. After Toyoharu died, his main pupil Utagawa Toyokuni I took over and led the group to become the biggest and most influential woodblock school of the nineteenth century. Pupils included Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, Hiroshige, and Yoshitoshi. Utagawa School is used as an attribution when prints are unsigned and in the style of the School. Due to the punitive restrictions on *shunga*, many works were produced without signatures or with pseudonyms.

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